

In Tokyo, An Imperial Greeting Is Reassuring

By A. M. Rosenthal

New York Times Service

TOKYO — In a brief ceremony made significant by its ordinance, Emperor Hirohito has appeared before thousands of his subjects to wish them well and to be heartily cheered in turn.

The emperor's public appearance Saturday was his first since he underwent intestinal surgery in September, and so his routine New Year's greeting to the Japanese became an important event, the clearest statement that he was recuperating well.

Despite pronouncements from his physicians that they had discovered no malignancies, many Tokyo residents say they do not believe it. Their skepticism was stoked by initial medical reports that were later revealed to have played down the seriousness of his illness.

A whispering campaign persists holding that the 86-year-old emperor is in far worse shape than the Imperial Household Agency has let on.

The tens of thousands of people who flocked to the Imperial Palace grounds were a measure of the concern. The crowds were thicker than in previous years. Many may have thought that this could be their last chance to see Hirohito, who has sat on the Chrysanthemum Throne since Dec. 25, 1926, the longest reign that any of the 124 emperors Japan has had.

Although no longer considered by his subjects to be a living god, as he was before and during World War II, Hirohito remains an aloof figure who appears before the public only twice a year — on Jan. 2 and on April 29, his birthday.

Because of his weakened condition, he came out to a palace balcony, which was encased in bullet-proof glass, only three times on Saturday. Last year he emerged five times.

The emperor walked to the balcony in his customary shuffle. He was flanked there by his eventual successor, Crown Prince Akihito, and the crown princess, Michiko, Empress Nagako; who has been ill for a long time, was not present.

"I am happy, for your good health," Hirohito said, in a clear voice over a microphone. "Thank you for your concern over my health. I hope you all have a good new year."

The crowds, waving thousands of paper Japanese flags, broke into cheers of "banzai," a traditional call for long life that literally means "10,000 years."

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In this image, a group of people are seen waving as the Emperor Hirohito makes his first public appearance at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo since his surgery in September.

ISRAEL: 9 Expulsions

(Continued from Page 1)

Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which bars deportations of persons from occupied territories "regardless of their motive."

Speakers for the White House and the State Department and the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Thomas R. Pickering, have all expressed opposition to the prospect of expulsions in recent days.

But Israeli officials, led by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Defense Minister Yitzhak Raham, have rejected the U.S. position, contending Israel has the right to evict those who threaten its security.

A senior official said the list of those to be deported was drawn up by a committee that included representatives from the prime minister's office, the Defense Ministry and the Foreign Ministry. Those to be expelled, he said, "are no angels of peace and they deserve not one inch of sympathy."

As for world reaction, the official said, "Who gives a damn? If we decide and carry on according to pressure applied by the international community, we will cease to exist. Golda Meir once said that if she had to choose between having the world's sympathy for being dead and being condemned for being alive she prefers to be alive, and that's how we feel."

The nine slated for expulsion range in age from 26 to 45 and include a lawyer, an engineer, a teacher, a university student, a prayer leader, a businessman, and a Christian.

According to government figures, 19 Palestinians have been deported since Israel renewed its expulsion policy in August 1985, and three more cases are pending.

Palestinians rights advocates put the figure at 44 because they include those expelled after the 1985 prisoner exchange. Israel contends those persons were never bona fide residents of the occupied territories.

■ Peres Defends Plans

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres defended on Sunday plans to expel the nine Palestinians and blamed tensions in the area for the killing of the Palestinian woman. That makes him an elder in the subculture.

"Look at the people sitting and standing here," he said. "Nearly everybody here is a prostitute or a client."

The café is filled with boys, their early teens and men who appear to be in their 50s.

Crime involving the prostitutes and their clients is common, according to Mr. Kowalski.

"The clients get robbed very often," he said. "They don't accuse the prostitutes because they are frightened that their gay identity will be discovered. We arrested one boy who admitted he had robbed clients 300 times. We asked

CAMPAIGN: After a Long Preseason, the Real '88 Race Starts in U.S.

(Continued from Page 1)

publicist field benefits, for now, from an undisputed "stature gap."

At least in its initial phase, the Republican race will pit two prominent figures of the party's center-right establishment, Vice President George Bush and the Senate minority leader, Bob Dole of Kansas, in a campaign likely to turn on character, roots, leadership — and gaffes.

It probably will not be about ideas or grand agendas, for neither has ever found it easy to make his case to the voters on that lofty ground. They are both managers.

■ The Republicans

Mr. Dole and Mr. Bush do not have the stage to themselves. Four other candidates have roles of varying importance.

Three appear to be hit players, scripted to vanish after the first couple of scenes. Representative Jack F. Kemp of New York, former Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig Jr. and former Governor Pierre S. du Pont IV of Delaware have had little success trying to convert their substantial governmental experience and well-developed policy views into political capital.

ted Christians whose size no one can confidently measure, he is hardened by a mainstream Republican revision to his theocratic message and to the fervor of his followers.

He almost certainly cannot win the nomination but, as a Republican consultant, Eddie Mahe, says, "if he can wedge himself between the main rivals, Pat Robertson probably will have more to do with what happens than either Bush or Dole."

■ The Democrats

What makes 1988 different is that the unknowns of yesteryear all

had something to play off: a sitting president, a front-runner, a war, the Watergate scandal. This year's group has no such prop.

When Mr. Hart got out of the race in May, he threw his competitors farther off balance than could have been imagined. They have spent the last eight months strug-

gled candidate or something more durable. After the Hart womenizing and Biden plagiarism episodes, Mr. Simon's squareness became ever more reassuring, and he has been playing it for all it is worth.

Senator Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee has pulled out of Iowa, making a virtue of necessity, and has consolidated his base among moderate southern Democratic elected officials.

Representative Richard A. Gephardt of Missouri lives or dies on Feb. 8, the day of the Iowa caucuses. He has moved virtually his entire campaign to Iowa. For him, the road to Dixie runs through Des Moines. However, no message he has delivered on issues from trade to farm policy, has seemed to stick with the voters.

Bruce Babbitt, a former Arizona governor, is a personal favorite of many in the press corps, but reporters do not believe he can win because of his unhappy relationship with his face, his voice, his mannerisms and the television cameras. His advocacy of means-testing, consumption taxes and democracy in the workplace are provocative. The question remains: Will they be aired?

A dizzying progression of state primaries and caucuses is ahead, including a record 20 on a single day, March 8.

pling to fill a void that will not be filled until the voters get involved.

With the exception of the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson, who espouses an anti-corporate, soak-the-rich platform, the Democratic candidates seem clear of sharp ideological edges. They try to come across as fixers and managers.

Governor Michael S. Dukakis of Massachusetts has raised \$10.6 million, twice the amount of his nearest rival. But critics say that his message has been small-bore, timid, not yet presidential.

The question for Senator Paul Simon of Illinois is whether he is a

FRANKFURT: AIDS Boosts Business of Male Prostitutes, Police Say

(Continued from Page 1)

people admitted they were ever prostitutes, let alone convince them that condoms should be used.

"The prostitutes don't care about the future," said Bernhard Kowalski, who heads the sex crimes unit of the Frankfurt police, adding, "They are like those flies that only live for one day, then die."

"Their clients are usually over 35," Mr. Kowalski said, "not good-looking enough anymore to attract anyone in the overt gay scene, but they still want sex and will pay for it. Sex without condoms is something special and they will pay more for that."

Another prostitute at the station, Jimmy, 22, said he is from Málaga in southern Spain, and that he has lived on the streets for 10 years. That makes him an elder in the subculture.

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with breasts. Even family magazines are laden with photographs of unclothed women and articles on how to be a better lover.

And now, the small minority of West Germans who get the RTL-Plus channel on cable television can also benefit from sex tips provided by Dr. Ruth Westheimer, the American sex therapist.

Speaking in her native German, the doctor provides 90 seconds of mostly technical advice every Friday from 8 to 8:30 A.M. So far, an RTL spokesman said, the station has had no adverse reaction.

Back down on the line, the boys

have never heard of Dr. Ruth.

REAGAN: Afghan Rebels Get a Reassuring Message

(Continued from Page 1)

Despite repeated demands by the United States and other nations, Moscow has not set a date for the pullout to begin. Nevertheless, the prospect that it may do so, possibly leading to a negotiated settlement of the war, has lifted details of the talks to a high place on the U.S. and Pakistani agendas and raised fears in some quarters about a premature cutoff of U.S. aid to the resistance.

Mr. Armacost has said the Reagan administration will insist on seeing all details of a negotiated pullout before undertaking a guard-and-role. He and other officials have reiterated Mr. Reagan's statement of Nov. 12, that "the withdrawal of Soviet forces is the key to resolving the Afghan crisis."

Convey Riders Reassure Khost

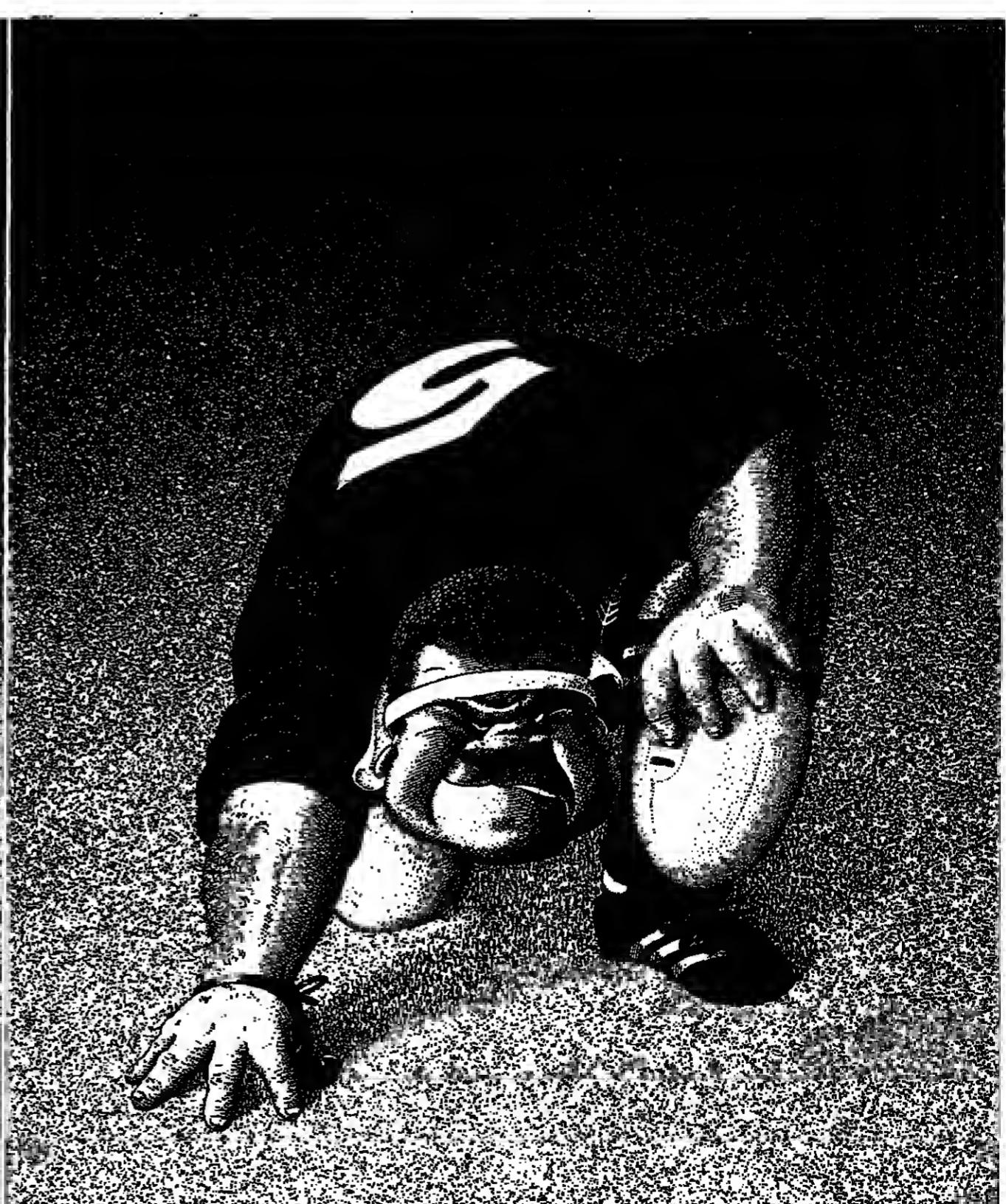
The Afghan government said Saturday that a fourth relief convoy had reached Khost after a long siege ended, but rebels said the huts continued, Reuters reported from Islamabad, Pakistan.

Afghan officials also said that Osman Demir, a West German national held on charges of spying and training rebels, had admitted shooting down two Afghan planes.

The official radio in Kabul said investigations showed Mr. Demir had trained the guerrillas in using U.S.-made Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.



Madrid, Spain. City of sunshine, cool breezes and romance. Of flamenco dancers, singers and guitarists. Of toreros and picadors. And now Thai opens its doors to this picturesque city. Flights commence December 5 from Bangkok via Rome every Saturday and Monday. Returning to Bangkok via Rome every Sunday and Tuesday.



Auckland, New Zealand. The perfect starting-off point for a holiday to remember. Skiing, boating, fishing, touring in the land of the famous All Blacks Rugby team. New Zealand has it all. Now Thai touches down there December 6, direct from Bangkok (leaves Saturdays), returns every Sunday.

Thai
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SPORTS

Auld Lang Syne

By Ira Berkow
New York Times Staffer

NEW YORK — While hearing the last, fading refrain of that New Year's classic, Old Lang Since (as some readers might have corrected the bonny Bobby Burns), we begin the annual look back on what has been written in this space.

For a column that was free of error, always right on target in regard to taste and judgment and prophecy, where cool reason prevailed like a fresh breeze, that never diverged from the highest standards of literacy, was front and center when *le mot juste* was urgently called for, it's amazing the number of people this past year who took quill in hand to complain about it.

A man from Pennsylvania wrote concerning a column on tennis and South Africa: "Why don't you concentrate on writing about sports and stay out of politics?"

Dear Sir: With all due respect, when did sports and politics become separate? Perhaps I was on vacation. Besides, if a sportswriter is allowed to vote — and some in this country are — he ought to be somewhat involved in politics, sort of like other citizens.

A man from Rye, New York, wrote: "There are no valid player issues motivating and/or justifying this deplorable football 'strike' that you write of. If the walkout continues, I suggest that you seek a place amongst those temporaries employed by the National Football League as you certainly need another source of income, having utterly failed as an objective commentator on sports."

Dear Sir: Can't fool me. You're a headhunter, aren't you — trying to drum up a little business?

A man from Indianapolis wrote: "Regarding your blistering attack on Coach Bob Knight, you must realize that immediately you place into question your basketball knowledge and/or objectivity by reducing Indiana's win over Syracuse to the result of a 'schoolyard' shot. ... I hope you will take a moment to respond, which might serve to indicate that you don't always take the easy route."

Dear Sir: And I was taught, easy does it. But the point was, a game is still a game and possibly not Armageddon.

A man from Blue Hill, Maine, added to my knowledge

of slipping white potatoes into a baseball game, as had the minor-league I wrote about. The man noted: "It was more than 50 years ago, even more, that I was thrilled when Burt L. Standish had Frank Merriwell executing the potato caper. How the runners scampered and how neatly Bart Hodge behind the plate and Bruce Something-or-other the first baseman, nailed 'em all! Thought you'd like to know."

Dear Sir: I do. Thank you. • A New Yorker wrote regarding my column on Chris Evert losing in a match because, some speculated, she was "too much in love." He referred to Herringway's "The Sun Also Rises," chapter six, in which Jake says of Robert Cohn: "He loved to win at tennis. He probably loved to win as much as Lenglen, for instance. ... When he fell in love with Brett his tennis game went all to pieces. People beat him who had never had a chance with him."

Dear Sir: Most experts agree: love is one powerful potion. • A man in North Bergen, New Jersey, wrote: "People like reading about George Steinbrenner every day. If you and the other sportswriters would simply stop and start writing about games and strategy and players, you might even get the guy to sell the team."

Dear Sir: He will be written about as long as he is news — that is, making decisions that affect the Yankees, an organization that was news even before there was a George, though it might be hard to convince him of that.

• Numerous correspondents were miffed that in my Baseball Encyclopedia column on nicknames I neglected folks like Mugsy McGraw, Snow Shodgrass and, most lamentably, Fidgety Phil Collins.

Dear Sirs: Space prohibited listing every nickname in that volume. Not only did I bypass Fidgety Phil Collins, I skipped Rip Collins and Zip Collins, too. To say nothing of Piano Legs Hickman, Rainbow Trout, Stuffy Melius, Creepy Crespi, Dandelion Pfeffer and Cannonball Titcomb.

Meanwhile, there were readers, it may surprise some, who had unqualified praise.

This from Valley Stream, New York: "Congratulations for being a great sportswriter. I am 94 years old."

Dear Sir: I blush.

To you, and to everyone else, Happy New Year.

Pitt's Proving It Belongs; New Mexico Upsets Arizona, 61-59

Compiled by Our Staff From Dispatches

PITTSBURGH — Is Pitt real?

Ranked third by The Associated Press and fourth by United Press International, Pittsburgh spent the first month of the college basketball season beating up on the likes of Robert Morris and St. Francis, so no one could tell.

But with Saturday's 80-68 victory over Florida (rated eighth by AP, ninth by UPI), the Panthers beat a ranked team for the first time this season.

Charles Smith scored 30 points and Jerome Lane hauled down 21 rebounds as Pitt improved to 9-0, its best start since the 1929 Panthers began 12-0.

Moreover, Pitt has been winning games while losing players. It has been playing without guard Mike Goodson, who was declared academically ineligible before the season, and injured swingman Demetresis Gore. The latest loss is Rod Brookins, who will miss the rest of the season because of

grade problems; he was averaging 12.6 points a game.

Those losses have been offset by the strong play of freshmen Sean Miller, Bob Martin, Jason Matthews and Darelle Porter. Those four combined for 35 points against Florida, Miller hitting for 14.

Smith, a 6-foot-10 (2.08-meter) senior center, played a solid all-around game. He hit 10 of 17 shots from the field and made 10 of 12 free throws. He also blocked 7 shots and had 3 steals.

"Before the game, I made the mistake of saying Charles Smith was having an average year for him," said Florida's coach, Norm Sloan.

Lane, a 6-foot junior, finished with only three points but said he was not concerned with scoring. "This year I'm strictly playing within the system," Lane said. "It's my job to try to get as many rebounds as I can."

Vernon Maxwell led Florida (8-3) with

20 points and Livingston Chairman added 16.

Elsewhere:

New Mexico 61, Arizona 59: In Albuquerque, New Mexico, Hunter Greene knocked away Sean Elliott's shot with five seconds left to preserve the Lobos' upset of top-rated and previously unbeaten Arizona. Greene swatted the ball away as Elliott launched a 3-point attempt.

After going 25-10 last season and not being picked for the NCAA tournament, New Mexico felt it had a score to settle. "We need the recognition, and that's why we were pumped up for this one," said point guard Jimmy Rogers, who scored 15 points to lead the winners.

New Mexico had taken an 11-point lead midway through the second half but the Wildcats, who returned the top six players

from last season's team that went 18-12, squeaked by. Tito Horford scored a game-high 26 points for the Wildcats.

Wyoming 94, Stephen F. Austin 55: In Laramie, Wyoming, Dennis Dembo scored 19 points and Reggie Fox added 12 to help Wyoming improve to 11-0. The Cowboys, by as many as 44 points before Coach Beatty Dees cleared his bench.

Syracuse 123, Siena 72: In Syracuse, New York, Ronny Seikaly scored a season-high 30 points to lead the Orangemen. Syracuse outscored Siena by 24-4 during a 6:30 span early in the game as more than 35,000 fans crowded the Carrier Dome.

Nevada-Las Vegas 69, New Mexico State 64: In Las Cruces, New Mexico, Jarvis Basnight tallied 22 points and had nine rebounds in helping unbeaten UNM to its 10th straight game of the year.

Gerald Paddio added 19 points for the winners.

SCOREBOARD

Basketball

National Basketball Association Standings

EASTERN CONFERENCE		WESTERN CONFERENCE	
Division	Team	W	L
Atlantic Division	Houston	21	28
	Washington	18	22
	Philadelphia	18	24
	New York	18	25
	New Jersey	9	19
Central Division	Toronto	21	26
	Detroit	20	24
	Chicago	16	12
	Indiana	14	15
	Cleveland	8	21
Midwest Division	Atlanta	7	21
	Detroit	10	7
	Milwaukee	15	11
	Seattle	10	12
	Phoenix	10	17
Pacific Division	L.A. Lakers	20	6
	Portland	18	11
	Seattle	16	13
	Phoenix	10	17
	Golden State	8	21

Eastern Conference	Western Conference
Atlantic Division	Midwest Division
Central Division	Midwest Division
Midwest Division	Pacific Division
Pacific Division	Midwest Division

FRIDAY'S RESULTS	SATURDAY'S RESULTS	SUNDAY'S RESULTS
LA Clippers 24-23 24-26 24-26 —	FAR WEST	FAIR WEST
New York 31-32 30-34 31-35 —	Rhode Island 74-76 BY-Houhou 46	Rhode Island 74-76 BY-Houhou 46
Washington 7-12 11-14 25 Wilkins 24-25	SATURDAY'S RESULTS	EAST
Boston 14-20 18-24 24-26 —	Allegany 71, Cornell-Mellon 59	Delaware 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71
Philadelphia 14-20 18-24 24-26 —	DePaul 48, Hartwick 48	Edinboro 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71
New York 14-20 18-24 24-26 —	Dalton 26, Miami 74	Edinboro 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71
Atlanta 14-20 18-24 24-26 —	Delaware 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71	Edinboro 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71
Seattle 14-20 18-24 24-26 —	Delaware 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71	Edinboro 102, Manhattan, N.Y., 71
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SPORTS

Vikings Stun Saints With 44-10 Victory

The Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Anthony Carter turned New Orleans' playoff songfest into a farewell chant with an 84-yard punt return, and Wade Wilson and Hassan Jones connected on a last-second touchdown pass before halftime as

NFL PLAYOFFS

the Minnesota Vikings shocked the Saints 44-10 in the National Football Conference wild-card playoff game here Sunday afternoon.

It was the first playoff game in the 21-year history of the Saints, who had won nine straight to finish the season at 12-3. And it got off to a roiling start when the Saints took a 7-0 lead just 1:23 into the game.

But the Mardi Gras atmosphere that had produced seven Saints songs and had fans milling outside the Superdome as early as 7 A.M. was darkened quickly by Carter and Wilson, who replaced Tommy Kramer at quarterback after the Vikings' starter fumbled on Minnesota's first two possessions.

Carter's return, a National Football League playoff record, gave the Vikings the lead for good at 10-7 with 3:03 left in the first period. Carter, who had returned just three punts in the regular season, also had six receptions for 79 yards in the game.

But the crusher was a call of too many players on the field just before the end of the first half. The call allowed a 44-yard touchdown pass from Wilson to Jones after time had expired in the half, giving the Vikings a 31-10 lead at halftime despite six New Orleans sacks on Kramer and Wilson.

Chuck Nelson added second-half field goals of 32 and 19 yards, and D.J. Dozier ran eight yards for a touchdown with 1:46 left to put the game to close out the scoring.

The Vikings, who lost three of their final four games, had backed into the playoffs with an 8-7 record when St. Louis lost to Dallas on Dec. 27. Minnesota now goes to San Francisco for an NFC semifinal on Saturday, while Washington travels to Chicago on Sunday for the other semifinal.

It gave the Vikings a 10-7 lead

"We just put everything together — offense, defense and special teams," said Coach Jerry Burns of Minnesota. "Everyone on our team played well."

The Saints now have to spend an off-season convincing an entire region that their first winning season was not a mirage.

"They caught us on a good day for them and a bad day for us," said Coach Jim Mora of the Saints. "Those kind of days happen."

Only the start was bright for the Saints.

Kramer fumbled on the second play of the game. Vaughn Johnson recovered for New Orleans, setting up Bobby Hebert's 10-yard touchdown pass to Ethan Martin two plays later and putting New Orleans ahead 7-0.

Chuck Nelson's 42-yard field goal after Mel Gray muffed a punt led to the 10-7.

Then came the explosion, set off by Carter's return. He side-stepped and tiptoed past four Saints and burst into the clear 70 yards from the goal line.

It gave the Vikings a 10-7 lead

with 3:03 left in the first quarter.

"Wilson added a 3-yard scoring pass to Steve Jordan and running back Allen Rice threw a 10-yard touchdown pass to Carter to an option in the second quarter as Minnesota completely controlled the ball. After the Rice-Carter connection with 6:10 remaining in the half, Minnesota had run 34 plays compared to 12 for New Orleans.

For the game, the Vikings were 12 of 19 on third-down conversions. They ran up 28 first downs to nine for the Saints, who were 1-of-9 on third down.

That was the work of the Minnesota defense, led by linemen Keith Millard and Chris Dooley. The Saints were intercepted four times and turned the ball over six times.

Still, it might have been a different story had it not been for the way the first half ended.

Morten Andersen's 40-yard field goal at the end of an 11-play, 68-yard drive made it 34-10.

Nelson kicked his third field goal with 7:14 left in the game after a 13-play, 54-yard drive. Then Dozier scored at the end of a 50-yard, 10-play drive on the ground that was orchestrated by third-string quarterback Rich Gannon.

were trotting off the field after Darren Nelson had been stopped on a screen pass at the 44, the officials called the teams back.

It turned out that the Saints had 12 men on the field and the Vikings had one last shot.

Wilson, who had been knocked groggy and replaced by Kramer for two plays, lofted the ball high to the end zone where four Saints and three Vikings leaped for it. Jones, a second-year wide receiver, tipped the ball with one hand, then grabbed it again and fell into the end zone.

The second half was simply an exercise in time consumption.

Kramer, meanwhile, returned and ran a controlled game.

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VANTAGE POINT / George Vecsey
It Ain't Broke Yet, So Don't Go Messin' With It

New York Times Service

It Ain't Broke Yet, So Don't Go Messin' With It

MIAMI — Once again this great nation of ours has avoided a major schism. The center has held. *E pluribus unum*, and all that.

The anarchic, money-grubbing system of college bowl games has produced a national champion without the help of the National Collegiate Athletic Association or any such collectivist agency that would install a playoff system. Who needs one?

Those modern-day boosters in their pastel jackets in Miami, New Orleans, Dallas, Phoenix and Pasadena, California, ran their local wingdings and gave the nation a champion, and its name is Miami.

The Darwinian moment of truth took place in the third quarter of the Orange Bowl late Friday night when Miami took chances on offense and then grabbed hold of Oklahoma's feared wishbone offense and pulled mightily on both ends.

If there was any big loser, it was the wishbone formation that terrorizes Nebraska and the soft underbelly of the Big Eight but has been exposed three times by Miami.

Johnson, who finally exorcised Howard Schnellenberger and Switzer from his nightmares, was working at Oklahoma when the wishbone was refined in the early '70s. "I have seen all the defenses people have used through the years," Johnson said. "We have been able to pick and choose."

Miami's systems worked, and so did the bowl system, once again. Johnson revealed that Oklahoma had dropped out of two scheduled regular-season games against Miami in order to set up their potential meeting in the Orange Bowl, which matches the Big Eight champion against the best available contender.

The result was a decisive enough 20-14 victory that sewed up the unofficial national championship for the school-atheletes from the football dormitory at Coral Gables.

By that time, everything else had fallen into place in this annual enlightened chaos.

Auburn had spoiled any outside hopes of unbeaten Syracuse by settling for a tie on a late field goal in the Sugar Bowl. Florida State had edged Nebraska in the Fiesta Bowl, but could not undo the 1-point loss to Miami during the season.

That left two good old coaches, Barry Switzer and Jimmy Johnson, those old fishing buddies, to settle matters in the cretor set known as the Orange Bowl.

Miami proved it was the champion by having the courage to go for a 56-yard field goal by Greg Cox, by passing on fourth-down-and-4 and by having linebackers who could chase down Oklahoma's wishbone swiftness.

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Year's bowls into feeder games, extending a final four well into January.

The delegates to the annual NCAA convention this month are going to vote on a playoff system. Richard Schulz, the new president of the NCAA, has said he expects the vote to be 2-1 against a playoff system. We can only hope.

Let the basketball teams fight their war of attrition, the long march of 64 teams every March. Football gives us a mystique, a tradition, sometimes even a controversy — who will ever forget President Nixon crowning the 1969 champion the winner of the Texas-Arkansas game, much to the consternation of Penn State's Joe Paterno?

You have permission to guffaw in the face of any officials who wring their hands because a two-week extension would interrupt the players' holidays and cut into their studying time. In the long run, the colleges will do what makes the most money.

The bowl games suit everybody's needs just fine. To be sure, very often, two powerhouses are going to finish the season undefeated, be ranked 1-2, and be committed to two different bowl games.

Then the writers are going to vote for one team in The Associated Press poll and the coaches are going to vote for another team in the United Press International poll. And The New York Times computer is going to vote for Columbia, just to be ornery.

But there are those in this great nation of ours who would twist and turn the New

York system still ain't broke.

the Super Bowl — which would be fine, too, as long as everybody stopped yapping by the opening of the baseball season.

This year fans can argue that Coach Pat Dye of Auburn should have tried to beat Syracuse instead of settling for the 30-yard field goal with four seconds remaining for a 16-16 tie. But a 13-yard pass was too much of a gamble for Auburn, which was not about to overtake Miami and Oklahoma, even with a victory.

Dye did not have the same motivation as gallant Tom Osborne of Nebraska, who tossed and lost for a 2-point conversion in losing to Miami, 31-30, in the 1984 Orange Bowl. It cost Nebraska the national title.

Syracuse did not lose much by Auburn's conservative field goal. Syracuse had been undefeated, with some pretensions of slipping into the top rating if Miami and Oklahoma stunk out the Orange Bowl.

Not much chance of that. In the schools, children usually know the pecking order of the meanest, the nastiest, the toughest. Just about everybody knew Oklahoma and Miami were No. 1 and No. 2. On Friday night, they just changed places.

As we have noted in past years, back home in the steep coal fields of Queens, New York, the wizened miners used to play horseshoes in the evening, spitting tobacco juice and uttering such folk wisdom as, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

The bowl system still ain't broke.

Syracuse, Auburn Play to a 16-16 Tie

By Dave Sell

Washington Post Service

NEW ORLEANS — Auburn Coach Pat Dye decided discretion and a field goal were the better part to foul and victory.

Thirteen yards from a possible touchdown and triumph, Dye decided it would be easier with a 16-16 tie against Syracuse in Friday

After that, it was all field goals.

Lyle hit from 40 yards with 47 seconds left in the game to send the Tigers to the locker room with a 10-7 lead.

The Orangemen will not look fondly on their first drive of the second half. After churning downfield on the ground — they outgained the Tigers 228 to 59 in rushing yards — they had third and three at the Auburn 4-yard line. Robert Drummond gained enough for the first down, but the play was nullified when officials said the 25-second clock had expired. McPherson said he saw one second left when the ball was snapped. Then McPherson threw to Glover on the same route that had worked before. But an official ruled the ball hit the ground before Glover caught it.

"I definitely caught it," Glover said, and the replays seemed to agree. Vesling then tied the game, 10-10, with a 27-yarder.

Syracuse got the ball at its 24 with 6:47 left and the score tied, 13-13. It moved into Auburn territory, but on third and one from the 22, Drummond was stopped six inches short of a first down. "No way," McPherson said when asked why he had Vesling kick a 38-yard field goal for a 16-13 lead instead of going for the first down. "Tim Vesling's a good kicker, and you have to dance with the people that bring you."

The Tigers, who were now trailing for the first time, started at their 25. Burger threw to Tillman, who made a one-handed grab on a pass that was behind him for a first down at the 36. After three more completions pushed the ball to the 48, Auburn called time with 57 seconds left.

Burger then bailed out for 18 yards to the Syracuse 34. After a completion to Stacy Danley, Auburn faced fourth and five at the 30 with 28 seconds left in the game. Burger came through hitting Danley for an eight-yard gain. Tillman, who finished with six catches for 125 yards, caught his last one for 7 yards, to the 13. With 13 seconds left, Burger hit Danley, but the freshman couldn't get out of bounds after his two-yard catch. Burger yelled for and got a timeout with four seconds left.

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Then it came down to a decision. "Pat Dye did what he thought was right for Auburn," said Syracuse nose guard Ted Gregory, who didn't play in the second half because he reinjured his knee. "I guess we'll just have to live with it."

ORANGE BOWL

By Sally Jenkins

Washington Post Service

MIAMI — All the statistics and all the victories couldn't help No. 1 Oklahoma. All second-ranked Miami was the smooth, clean lines of its fine passing game, and that was more than enough to defeat the Sooners, 20-14, in Friday night's Orange Bowl and collect the second national championship in school history.

The 12-0 Hurricanes had an unheralded sophomore at quarterback in Steve Walsh, who was missing

short, no postseason victories since the national championship.

"Anytime you lose three straight Jan. 1 games, people say, 'Can they win?'" defensive back Bennie Blades said before the game. "This team has to say, 'Hey, we can win after December.' We have to erase those doubts around the country."

Miami's determination to do so was immediately evident, when Walsh threw his 30-yard touchdown pass to Bratton on the game's opening possession. The Hurricanes went 51 yards in eight plays and just 3:21.

The scoring play came on a simple streak by Bratton on first and 10. He slid past cornerback Derrick White, and Walsh never hesitated with the throw to the shallow left corner of the end zone. Cox's left foot was solid, and the ball was in the hands of the Sooners' defensive back.

But Miami's next four drives gained just 63 yards combined. And if the Hurricanes took the upper hand by scoring on their first possession, Oklahoma took the momentum to the locker room by mounting a touchdown drive on its final first-half possession, which ended with Bratton's one-yard run.

Walsh threw four passes of 30 yards to running back Melvin Bratton in the first quarter and 23 yards to flanker Michael Irvin in the third. Greg Cox added a field goal of 56 yards in the third period and chipped in with a 48-yarder.

The drive was a result of the turnover of the half, when all-American safety Rickey Dixon intercepted a badly thrown Walsh pass at midfield. Oklahoma took over at the 49, but Miami made it as difficult as possible. The Sooners took 15 plays and the next 6:11 to score, including a fourth-and-one conversion by LeRoy Carr at the 40.

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The touchdowm pass came on third and 10. Irvin beating Dixon by three strides on a streak to the end zone, where Walsh found him in the corner. Cox's extra point made it 17-7 with 2:37 left in the third quarter.

Michigan St. Takes Rose Bowl by 20-17

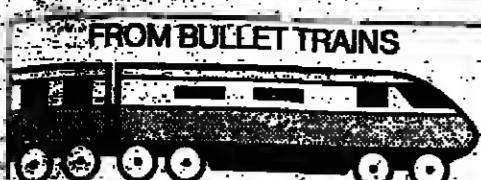
By John Feinstein

Washington Post Service

PASADENA, Calif. — The stars of the game, in no particular order, were a field-goal kicker, the left foot of a linebacker and a play-by-play announcer.

The Trojans dominated the third quarter, but a botched snap on a field-goal attempt and Peete's overthrows of Eric Alfholder stopped drives. The Spartans did not get a first down until the last play of the quarter, and then John Langholz kicked a 40-yard field goal with 12:39 left to make it 17-10.

Peete quickly hit four straight passes to move the ball to the Michigan State 36. But on third and four, a botched snap on a field-goal attempt, backup quarterback Kevin McLean ran eight yards for a first down. Two plays later, Peete hit Henry in the end zone, and Langholz kicked a 31-yard field goal with 10:13 left to give Michigan State a 20-17 lead.



MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 1988

ECONOMIC SCENE

Negative Wealth Effect:
Pop Goes the Psychology

By AMITAI ETZIONI

New York Times Service

NEW YORK — Recent forecasts about U.S. economic activity in the near future advance two propositions: first, that a "negative wealth effect" will result in an economic slowdown, possibly a recession; second, that any recession would be mitigated by a "confidence-building" reduction in the deficit. But neither thesis is well-anchored in theory or fact.

There are reasons to forecast an economic slowdown. The U.S. recovery is already one of the longest on record, and while economists are never able to explain business cycles, even to their own satisfaction, their regularity is well established. Yet before Oct. 19, most economists were not predicting a near-term slowdown, let alone a recession. What changed?

An issue is not the \$1 million or so that investors lost when the stock market collapsed. Nobody dares to suggest that people made detailed purchase plans on the basis of recent gains in their paper profits. What is said to have changed is the psychology of investors. There is evidence that as people grow wealthier, they also feel richer and are more willing to spend, and dip more deeply into their savings. But since Oct. 19, economists argue, people feel poorer, and hence will do the opposite.

But there is no solid evidence to support the economists' presupposition about the wealth effect. Indeed, data from a number of experiments suggest that people are not less influenced by a single event like the Oct. 19 plunge in stock prices than by sequences of events. These events drive feelings more than feelings drive events, the data indicate.

In one experiment, Professor Vernon L. Smith of the University of Arizona gave economics students a simulated computerized portfolio of stocks as well as money to invest. The students were given the same information and were free to take home their profits after 15 or more sessions of simulated trading. In binges of speculation, Mr. Smith's investors drove stock prices far above their fundamental value. When the computerized markets eventually crashed, the investors learned little. It took two, three or more of these simulated crashes to lower bidding close to the stocks' fundamental value.

THE RESEARCH findings suggest that if the Dow Jones industrial average remains around 2,000 or gradually creeps up in the coming months, then Oct. 19 is likely to be treated by investors as an aberration rather than as a part of a larger trend or pattern. Although it will not be forgotten by investors, it will not have any lasting effect on investments or purchasing habits. Under this scenario, the negative wealth effect is likely to be small.

If, however, during the next few months, the stock market drops several hundred points in a day or falls sharply over several days before creeping back up, investors will leave the market in droves, institutional investors will cut back on holdings and individuals will curtail purchases. Whether or not Oct. 19 is treated as a major negative wealth effect cannot be determined by what happened on that day, but by what happens next.

A recent study at Harvard University also shows that the media tend to interpret stock market run-ups by focusing on positive news, and crashes by focusing on negative news. In simulated trading, this news bias led investors to splurge or tighten their belts more than market trends alone would warrant.

Practically all of the post-crash economic forecasts assume that Congress will trim the federal budget deficit and implement the agreement reached in late November. If Congress and the president had not reached an agreement in November to cut the deficit, or if Congress does not implement the accord, then, economists say, the public will lose confidence.

The trouble with this line of analysis is that it is very narrow. Imagine two scenarios: In one, the deficit is cut at once but other problems arise — the arms-reduction agreement fails or the president grows morose over the health of his wife. Under these conditions, confidence in the government will hardly improve.

In the second scenario, assume that the deficit is cut, but by no more than \$35 billion, without any further agreement between the Congress and the president — but that the next summit talks exceed all expectations, the president finds new vigor and actively campaigns for his legacy and successor, and the stock market in Japan soars because of rising confidence in the Tokyo government. Under these conditions, public confidence may swell.

In short, if psychology is to be factored in, one must recall that people's psyches are simultaneously affected by many factors. Economists would do well sticking to their own knitting rather than practicing psychology without a license.

Amitai Etzioni is a professor at George Washington University and a visiting professor at the Harvard Business School. Carl Gerecht is on vacation. The Eurobonds column will return on Monday, Jan. 11.

Last Week's Markets

All figures are as of close of trading Thursday

Stock Markets		Money Rates			
		United States	United States	Dec. 31	Dec. 24
DJ Indust.	1,783.85	1,779.70	-3.04 %	Discount rate	6
DJ Util.	1,725.00	1,725.00	0.00 %	Federal funds rate	7
DJ Corp.	1,724.00	1,723.00	-0.27 %	Interest rate	8%
S & P 100	228.25	244.45	+2.61 %	Discount	2%
S & P 200	247.05	252.00	+1.94 %	Call money	4
S & P Ind.	265.84	291.28	+2.23 %	3-month Interbank	3%
NYSE Co.	138.22	140.00	+1.33 %		
British				Lombard	4%
FTSE 100	1,712.00	1,791.10	+4.88 %	Call money	4%
FT 30	1,373.30	1,422.00	+4.12 %	3-month Interbank	3.5%
Japan				Bank rate	9%
Mitsubishi	21,544.00	22,129.00	+2.62 %	Call money	8%
West Germany				3-month Interbank	8.25/84
Commercial	1,294.70	1,252.40	-3.17 %		Dec. 31, Dec. 24
New York				London pmt. ECU	486.50
Home Sess.	2,265.75	2,379.07	+5.21 %	London pmt. FLS	486.50
World				London pmt. GBP	483.75
MSCI P.	412.00	416.00	+1%		+0.57 %

World Index From Morgan Stanley Capital Int'l.

Currency Rates

Cross Rates		Dec. 31	
5	8.	D.M.	P.F.
Amsterdam	1,777	3,225	1,735
Brussels	1,774	33,125	1,845
Frankfurt	1,915	2,36	1,925
London (D)	1,670	1,970	1,670
Milan	1,162.50	1,074.25	1,172.77
New York (C)	1,084.50	78.05	1,105.50
Paris	534	10.30	1,298
Tokyo	123.85	22.85	122.85
Zurich	1,274.5	1,288.00	1,274.50
1 ECU	1,023	1,068.4	1,024.00
1 SDR	0.78	2,204.0	2,275.00

Closings in London, Tokyo and Zurich. Ratings in other centers. New York closing rates.

a: Commercial bank; b: To buy one pound; c: To buy one dollar; d: Units of 100; f: Not available; g: Not available.

Globe-Dollar Valuers

	Currency	Per 5	Currency	Per 5	Currency	Per 5	Currency	Per 5
Argo, euro	1.05	1.05	Greece	1,0245	West. reso	224.05	S. Afr. rand	1,1065
Australia	1.295	1.295	Greek drac.	125.25	N. Zealand	1,5163	Soviet ruble	1,540
Austria	1.210	1.210	Hong Kong \$	1,207.00	Nis. sheq.	4,2108	Swiss franc	1,2015
Belo. fr. sr.	2.218	2.218	Indon. rupiah	147.00	Norw. krona	2,205	Taiwan \$	1,2015
Brazil cr.	1.205	1.205	Irish £	1.205	Portug. escudo	1,2045	Taiwan lire	1,2015
Canada	2.221	2.221	Italian lire	1,205	Phil. peso	3,2465	Taiwan dollar	1,2015
Chilean cru.	2.221	2.221	Malta £	1.205	Sing. dollar	1,205	Taiwan sh. 1,2015	1,2015
China	1.205	1.205	Swiss franc	1.205	Taiwan £	2,205	Taiwan sh. 1,2015	1,2015
Denmark	1.205	1.205	Turkish lira	1,205	Yuan	785.00	Venez. boliv.	1,2015

New York rates unless marked (local rates).

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NASDAQ National Market

OTC Consolidated trading for week ended Thursday Dec. 31

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of the Presidential Task
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abhad said that Mr. Rao
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from London's Gatwick
decision to ban night
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Rick Reffern
CHARACTER DESK
"CHARLES ONCE
Wrote Life Sent Back
UP PLEASE."

West Germany, West Ger-
many, Spain, Santa
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Answer: A

Jumble: HUMID PAPER ENTITY

Answers tomorrow:

Thursday's Jumble:

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THE FEED LIMIT

Answers tomorrow:

Saturday's Jumble:

Answer: Fat is the penalty for exceeding this

THE FEED LIMIT

Answers tomorrow:

Sunday's Jumble:

Answer: Fat is the penalty for exceeding this

THE FEED LIMIT

Answers tomorrow:

Tuesday's Jumble:

Answer: Fat is the penalty for exceeding this

THE FEED LIMIT

Answers tomorrow:

Wednesday's Jumble:

Answer: Fat is the penalty for exceeding this

THE FEED LIMIT

Answers tomorrow:

Thursday's Jumble:

Answer: Fat is the penalty for exceeding this

THE FEED LIMIT

Answers tomorrow:

Friday's Jumble:

Answer: Fat is the penalty for exceeding this

THE FEED LIMIT

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Answers tomorrow:

Friday's Jumble:

Princeton Endangered

International Herald Tribune

PRINCETON, New Jersey — Princeton has always been on this side of paradise: not at all a college town like, say, Cambridge, Massachusetts, or Amherst, but a civilized enclave that includes a great university among its amenities.

It is a town of old money and

MARY BLUME

well-worn clothes, of good silver, fine shade trees and the Protestant qualities of reticence, responsibility and restraint. A little snug and clannish, perhaps (Albert Einstein who lived there, described it as a "quaint and ceremonious village of puny demigods on stilts"), but a place full of qualities that money can't buy. Which means of course that everyone is trying to buy them, and succeeding. The scuffed white shoe has gone Gucci.

In what residents regard as a nightmare situation, Princeton has become a boom town in the center of New Jersey's so-called Princeton Corridor, stretching some 20 miles along Route I from New Brunswick to Trenton: an area that has been called "Los Angeles East" and which may become New Jersey's largest city, with a population of almost half a million by 1990. Real estate prices in Princeton Township have doubled in just three years.

Having a Princeton zip code has provided an unexpected bonus to many corporations. "I always thought of Princeton as a sleepy little town without the kind of traffic we were looking for as developers," the managing partner of Carnegie Associates told the writer Richard Trenner (Princeton '71).

"But we're thrilled by how well it's gone here. Princeton's name is very powerful."

Carnegie Associates owns one of Route 1's major developments, Carnegie Center, which includes office and conference space, a shopping mall and hotels, and which plans within the decade to have 28 buildings on its 520 acres.

Smaller businesses have also

found magic in a Princeton postal code to the point where The New York Times ran a story headlined "Businesses Seek Cachet of a Princeton Address."

The Princeton post office has moved into a larger building and has increased its number of post office boxes from 400 to 2,000.

In the town of Princeton itself, the signs of change would hardly be apparent to the day-trippers who now flock to buy Princeton T-shirts and ask where Einstein lived, but they are causing anxiety among residents who foresee gridlock on Nassau Street, Princeton's main drag.

The old Nassau Inn, long a student and alumni refuge with admirable English-style coziness, and laconically English-style food, now offers valet parking and a concierge. Framed photographs of forgotten track teams decorate the Yankee Doodle Tap Room and the lobby is filled with purposeful executives with plastic badges. On a typical day a few weeks ago, the following corporations had meetings in the old hotel: AT&T, Hydrocarbon, Morgan Stanley, Canadian Imperial Bank and W.R. Grace.

On the same day, at 9:45 A.M., a longtime resident was accosted on Nassau Street by a woman handing out a gold calling card that identified her as Mrs. Erika, "The University Psychia." Advice on all problems." Mrs. Erika wore a black mink coat. "Nobody in Princeton wears black mink coats," said the resident furiously. "I mean, when the fortune tellers come in mink coats, it's not a very good sign, is it?"

No, nor is it that Talbot's, the venerable shop that sells hard-wearing wraparound skirts that are the old Princeton resident's uniform, is now flanked by Laura Ashley, specialist in the spurious and quaint.

"Princeton has lost any rough edges it ever had and has become a Bloomingdale's in the suburbs. It is a suburb now," says George Williamson 3d (Princeton '84), editor of the Princeton Alumni Weekly. "It is silly and vulgar and pretentious. My grandfather



Quiet corners of the university contrast with the booming malls outside.

[Princeton '18] would be horrified.

"The quality of life is different," says Donald C. (Jeb) Stuart '63, editor and publisher of Princeton's weekly Town Topics. "We used to have showmen who knew you by name. Now it is absentee ownership, they just put in a manager."

Palmer Square, the town's center, has been completely re-vamped from dignified dowdiness to shopping mall modern. Benetton is there, and Banana Republic, and something called Kitchen Kapers. Many managers are forced by their owners to open on Sundays, obliging older shops to close.

"Sunday used to be a quiet day, we went to church and the Nassau Inn for lunch," Jeb Stuart says. "Now the town is hustling."

One old-time resident traces Princeton's decline to the end of World War II when direct train service to New York opened the gates to dubious city types. More realistically, the big change is traced to the mid-'70s when Palmer Square was sold to developers by Princeton University.

The fact that the university confined in the town's decline outrages many graduates. "An awful lot of alumni feel that Princeton University is in the real estate business and dabbles with education on the side," said

James C. Sayen (Princeton '38) in the Princeton Alumni Weekly. "Many local alumni are coming to believe that the university has lost its soul to the money managers of this world."

What has reduced alumni to the role of sputtering paper tigers is that the university not only sold Palmer Square but built the earliest and biggest of the offices and research complexes along Route 1, Forrestal Center.

By the early 1990s Forrestal Center will employ 25,000 people, roughly the population of Princeton Township in 1984. With Carnegie Center, which will employ 10,000 when completed, Forrestal Center has transformed Route 1 into a rich and bleak new town.

Not all Princetonians regret the change. Route 1's chief booster is Richard K.O. Rein (Princeton '69) who in 1984 founded a newspaper for the area's workforce called U.S. 1. Probably the only newspaper for the area's workforce called U.S. 1. Probably the only newspaper to be devoted to a highway, U.S. 1 calls itself "Princeton's Business and Entertainment Journal" and comes out every other week with a circulation of 15,600.

People have equated development with something bad," Rein says. "No one remembers how desolate and tawdry Route 1 was — gas stations, two stands and guest-cottage motels. That's it. It was not the routine job world." And now paradise is that, with a Burger King and mad Erika the fortune teller to boot.

Old Princetonians, Rein says, benefit from the amenities of the new centers while complaining. In the Princeton Alumni Weekly, he was quoted as saying, "I have little sympathy for the bluebloods of Princeton who are trying to keep it just for themselves. People in Princeton had it good for a long time, but the rest of the world finally caught on."

Rein continues wisely to live in the unblushing heart of old Princeton, where he is regarded as a traitor. "People never actually say anything, though I do get invited to fewer cocktail parties."

Instead of a barren stretch of highway, there is now a community, Rein argues. His opponents point out that development has, however, destroyed the old fabric, replacing silk — rather, sturdy old wool — with polyester.

Saul Bellou, who once lived there, wrote in "Humboldt's Gift" of Princeton, "Between noisy Newark and squall Treto, it was a sanctuary, a zoo, a spa and lovely green cages." He presciently added, "Maybe Princeton was not counted for more. It was not the factory or the department store . . . it was not the routine job world." And now paradise is that, with a Burger King and mad Erika the fortune teller to boot.

LANGUAGE

Problema? Don't Trust, Verify

By William Safire

WASHINGTON — Brush up your Russian: Gorbachev is back. When Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev signed the treaty in Washington on medium-range missiles, the world television audience witnessed what seemed like a nice bit of byplay between the two leaders. Reagan recalled a Russian maxim: "Thought my pronunciation may give you difficulty, the maxim is *dovorozh' az pravotey*: 'Trust but verify.'

According to the interpreter, Gorbachev replied amiably: "You repeat that at every meeting." Reagan smiled, "I like it," and the spirit of good will was all over the place.

otherwise, we could be said to run on at the mouth, or have *logorrhea*, or *bolante*. "Do you suspect," asked Cable News Network's Bernard Shaw of President Reagan; "that Gorbachev thinks he can do a snow job on the American people?" The president ducked the question, but the phrase came up again during summit week this time as a verb in a comment by Malcolm Forbes, who had been in a meeting with the Soviet leader: "The fact that he mixes a little venom with the candor — he unloaded on the press people he met — to me, it lends credence to the fact that he's not trying to snow job us."

A snow job is a line of patter intended to persuade or deceive. The noun phrase first appeared in the American Mercury of November 1943, in the article "Service Man's Slang" by Albert A. Ostrow. According to Ostrow, when a GI meets a woman at a dance, "he falls for it she's been snowed under." Where did it come from? Perhaps the 1890s term *snowed under*, which means "overwhelmed" (and why that phrase should not be *snowed over* I don't know). Other theories exist, including *snow* as a slang synonym for cocaine, also a white substance.

The old *refuznik* who heard the Russian phrase before the English translation writes to set us straight: "The general secretary used the Russian verb *bolante*, which does not mean 'repeat' but means 'drive.' He said, 'You always drive that,' which sounds in this context rather rude. Most of my Russian friends were flabbergasted, even in Soviet schools they teach people not to use such rude words when speaking to older and respected people, let alone presidents."

I turned to a second, perhaps more objective, source: Eugene Beschenkovsky, information manager at Columbia University's W. Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study of the Soviet Union: "Bolante does not quite mean 'to drive,' which suggests nonsense. It is closer to 'to talk about just for the sake of talking.'" It does not mean, as the interpreter softened it, *repeat*, the Russian verb for which is *povtorit*. Well, was it rude? "It is not considered a very polite expression," said Beschenkovsky, trying to be diplomatic, but he then had to be straight about it: "Yes, rude."

The translation, I think, would have been: "You do run on at the mouth about that," or more politely, "You always go on and on about that."

That might have wiped the smile off the president's face.

IN a piece about the way the presence of the American media turns Gorb'y-skiy into Gorb'y-Hyde, I used the term *problema* to mean "no problem."

A problem: I used the nominative case, *problem*, but after a negative, the genitive case is called for, however, destroyed the old fabric, replacing silk — rather, sturdy old wool — with polyester.

Saul Bellou, who once lived there, wrote in "Humboldt's Gift" of Princeton, "Between noisy Newark and squall Treto, it was a sanctuary, a zoo, a spa and lovely green cages." He presciently added, "Maybe Princeton was not counted for more. It was not the factory or the department store . . . it was not the routine job world." And now paradise is that, with a Burger King and mad Erika the fortune teller to boot.

WATCH those obscure allusions. I let a similar be my umbrella; in a recent piece — "I am unready as Ethelred" — figuring that a few people would catch the allusion to King Ethelred II of England who reigned from 976 to 1016. Known as "Ethelred the Unready," he was stuck in my mind as an example of a ruler who believed in unilateral disarmament.

The phrase appears in Serbo-Croatian as *nema problema*, and may be traveling along the route taken by the world's most widely adopted Americanism, *O.K.*

"On a trip to Kenya this past September," writes Bill Abbott of Westport, Connecticut, "we were astonished to hear the American phrase from a Massai warrior when our van stopped at a village to take pictures and bargain over beads and spears. But then it was in reply to my offer of half the asked-for shillings: 'No problem, Mister.'"

In current use around the world, the phrase's sense seems to be broadening from its literal meaning to "Glad to help," "You're welcome" and the ubiquitous "O.K." Let's keep an eye on this, but in a relaxed way,

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